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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/985,937	11/06/2001	Thomas Nosker	POLY 2	4212

23599 7590 12/26/2002

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EXAMINER

LE, MARK T

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3617

DATE MAILED: 12/26/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/985,937

Applicant(s)

NOSKER ET AL.

Examiner

Mark T. Le

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 November 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3,4,8,9,13-21 and 23-34 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3,4,8,9,13-20,24-25 and 27-34 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 21,23 and 26 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This communication is responsive to the amendments filed on November 12, 2002. Applicant's amendments and remarks have been carefully considered.
2. The oath or declaration is defective. A new oath or declaration in compliance with 37 CFR 1.67(a) identifying this application by application number and filing date is required. See MPEP §§ 602.01 and 602.02.

The oath or declaration is defective because the post office address does not include the ZIP Code designation.

3. The specification is objected to because it does not include all the sections for a complete specification. The following guidelines illustrate the preferred layout for the specification of a utility application. These guidelines are suggested for the applicant's use.

Arrangement of the Specification

As provided in 37 CFR 1.77(b), the specification of a utility application should include the following sections in order. Each of the lettered items should appear in upper case, without underlining or bold type, as a section heading. If no text follows the section heading, the phrase "Not Applicable" should follow the section heading:

- (a) TITLE OF THE INVENTION.
- (b) CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS.
- (c) STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT.
- (d) INCORPORATION-BY-REFERENCE OF MATERIAL SUBMITTED ON A COMPACT DISC (See 37 CFR 1.52(e)(5) and MPEP 608.05. Computer program listings (37 CFR 1.96(c)), "Sequence Listings" (37 CFR 1.821(c)), and tables having more than 50 pages of text are permitted to be submitted on compact discs.) or
REFERENCE TO A "MICROFICHE APPENDIX" (See MPEP § 608.05(a). "Microfiche Appendices" were accepted by the Office until March 1, 2001.)
- (e) BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION.
 - (1) Field of the Invention.
 - (2) Description of Related Art including information disclosed under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
- (f) BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION.
- (g) BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING(S).

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(h) DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION.

(i) CLAIM OR CLAIMS (commencing on a separate sheet).

(j) ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE (commencing on a separate sheet).

(k) SEQUENCE LISTING (See MPEP § 2424 and 37 CFR 1.821-1.825. A "Sequence Listing" is required on paper if the application discloses a nucleotide or amino acid sequence as defined in 37 CFR 1.821(a) and if the required "Sequence Listing" is not submitted as an electronic document on compact disc).

4. Claims 24-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Garber (US 1,297,828).

Garber, Figure 2, shows rails 7 attached to at least one railroad tie 11. The structure of Garber requires the step of attaching rails 7 to tie 11 as now broadly recited in amended claims 24-25. Regarding the structural limitation of apparatus claim 1, it is not considered to be patentably significant in defining the instant claimed step of the instant method claim over the prior art.

5. Claims 1, 3-4, 8-9, 13-20, 24-25, and 27-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nosker (US 5,916,932) in view of Reis (US 2,051,619).

Nosker discloses a polymeric railroad tie similar to that recited in the instant claims, except that it does not include an arrangement of concave shapes as recited in the instant claims.

Applicant should consider concave shapes 9 of Reis. Regarding the claimed variations of dimensions/sizes and shapes of the concave shapes, note that Reis has already provided a teaching of concaved shapes in the form of truncated shape recesses 9 on a longitudinal side of a tie to prevent creeping of the tie. However, as to the specific dimensions/sizes and shapes of the instant claimed recesses, they are merely obvious matters of minor variations of the dimensions or shapes of the recesses

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of Reis. Accordingly, in absent of evidences that such minor variations are critical to the tie structure of Reis, one skilled in the art would not have found such minor variations as being patentably distinct from the structure of Reis.

In view of Reis, it would have been obvious to skilled in the art to provide an arrangement of concave shapes on a longitudinal side of the tie of Nosker, in a manner similar to that taught by Reis, so as to enhance the tie's resistance to sliding.

Regarding the claimed variations of dimensions and shapes of the recesses, note that as a matter of common knowledge, it would have been within the realm of one skilled in the art to make such concave shapes on Nosker's tie, with minor dimension and shape variations from the concave shape of Reis as long as such variations do not depart from the basic teaching of Reis. Note that one of the benefits of such design variations is allowing greater flexibility in manufacturing processes. See also the guidelines for treatments of obvious changes in sizes and shapes, in MPEP 2144.04, IV(A),(B).

Regarding the claimed components of the mixture and the percentage weight of each component, it is the examiner's position that as a matter of common sense, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to form the railroad tie of Nosker et al from a mixture of known materials having known characteristics so as to achieve the expected advantages of such known materials; and as to the claimed percentages of the components of the mixture, it is also a matter of common sense because one skilled in the art would have been able to justify the percentages of mixture of the components in relative to the desired effective contribution of each of said components.

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6. Claims 21, 23 and 26 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

7. Applicant's amendment to claims 24-25, now clearly define the instant claimed step of the method claims, necessitated the new ground of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark T. Le whose telephone number is 703-308-3663. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (8:00-5:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Samuel Morano can be reached on 703-308-0230. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9326 for regular communications and 703-872-9327 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1113.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark T. Le". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mark T. Le
Primary Examiner
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mle

December 24, 2002